



Iowa Department of Natural Resources

For Immediate Release

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Construction Begins on Honey Creek Resort Lodge

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DNR Announces Honey Creek Resort State Park Management Partnership

DES MOINES — The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is pleased to announce the selection of Central Group Companies, St. Cloud, Minn., to manage Honey Creek Resort State Park. Construction of the facility continues and is on schedule to open summer 2008.

Central Group Companies will oversee the daily operations of the state park's lodge, aquatic center, convention center, restaurant and golf course. The company will also team with the DNR to provide educational programming and nature-based activities at the facility.

According to DNR Project Administrator Terry Montgomery, the company's mission for Honey Creek Resort State Park mirrors that of the state's – to create a destination resort experience while preserving and showcasing Iowa's natural resources. Central Group Companies' expertise in hospitality management will help ensure this mission resonates throughout the resort.

“We are very pleased with Central Group's understanding of our natural resource focus combined with their impressive experience in resort management,” said Montgomery. “The upcoming months are an exciting time for Honey Creek Resort and we are confident in Central Group's ability to help create one of Iowa's premier travel destinations.”

Central Group Companies has 17 years of experience in developing and managing hospitality properties. Their sites include: the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nev., where plans are under way for a 200,000-square-foot indoor water park; Cabela's resorts in Owatonna, Minn., Prairie du Chein Wis. and Sidney, Neb.; and water parks in Wisconsin,

Minnesota, Kansas and Montana. They have consulted on numerous other projects including a 40,000-square-foot indoor water park addition to a full service convention hotel in Waukesha, Wis.

Bob Pace, Central Group Companies President and CEO stated, “We are excited to have been selected to open and manage this unique destination Resort. We look forward to a partnership with the DNR in providing Iowans and guests from the region with an entire array of exciting experiences in every season. Honey Creek, with its magnificent water front campus will appeal to traditional resort guests, golfers, families, wedding parties, corporate meeting attendees and nature lovers of all ages.”

Honey Creek Resort State Park will initially include a 105-room lodge, a convention center accommodating up to 300 people, restaurant, lounge, indoor aquatic center, 18-hole championship golf course, spa, beach, boat ramp, boat docking facilities and hiking trails. The resort complex will be across the bay from the existing 850-acre Honey Creek State Park on the shore of Rathbun Lake in south-central Iowa. An activity center, day-use shelters and family/group cabins are also slated to be built in future stages of the project.

Construction of the lodge, convention center, restaurant and water park is proceeding on site, including framing and wall construction. Additional construction projects to begin soon include the golf course clubhouse, maintenance building, boat docks/fishing platform and waste treatment lagoons. The golf course has reached substantial completion.

Honey Creek Resort State Park will accommodate groups and families with a wide range of outdoor interests and experience. The project also highlights a strong conservation ethic with the lodge facilities designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) certification standards, and the golf course being built to meet Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program certification.

The principal financing source for the project is \$28 million in bond proceeds that will be paid over a 30-year period with revenues generated by the resort. Local support for the project has been demonstrated through financial, equipment, labor and other in-kind donations. Rathbun Regional Water, Chariton Valley Electrical Cooperative and Iowa Telecom are contributing more than \$2 million in utility systems. Appanoose and Monroe counties, Rathbun Lake Resort, Inc. and private contributors have committed more than \$2 million, some of which will be repaid from hotel/motel tax receipts.

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